Last Year at Betty and Bob's: A Novelty
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BØB was busy. Much time had passed since he’d enjoyed supping in a world of tasty powders. Piles of pulverized grains and other foodstuffs were profusely scattered in this place. A hungry rat could choose from white, brown, and multi-grain flour. The sticky doughy bits of not-yet cupcakes and the crusty crumbs of croissant scraps were his favorites. He had an urge to embed his snout in the hole of a sesame bagel today, fastidiously gnawing away at its deliciousness from the inside out, emulating the style of a black hole consuming its event horizon. A tactical mating impulse to be sure, this eating inversion would enhance his pleasure of the meal.

Certainly desire in its many guises, drew him here. Down the slinky compressed dirt tunnel of the south-by-south-east common burrow and through the inconspicuous chip between the bricks behind the pastry oven. This was the entrance/exit for his species to another’s source of daily bread. As usual, he made this journey alone. His solitary habits were beginning to irk him, to weigh on his innate sense of pack responsibility as well as his emotional want for company. His cousin’s twice-monthly presence assuaged a minimum requirement of sociability but if he’s honest with himself, it’s not enough. It doesn’t mend
his self-imposed rupture with his fellows, his sensate requirement of belonging.

Agitated and disconcerted by unhappy feelings of solitude and social gaffery he devoured a quarter bag of sesame seeds, several walnuts, and a pecan. Finding residue from clover honey drippings on the floor near the marble pastry table he licked the stuff, careful not to bind his nails in its sticky mass.

Filled to bloating, BØB retreated to a dark corner near enough to the hole in the mortar to feel safe in a long respite of digestion. Satiated, the urge to exercise his laryngeal unit in this place of granulated particulates surprises him as he has not yet had his Spiritus fix. Can he sing un-soused? Worth a try he reckons as he deep breathes to prime his lungs for the test. He then emits a quavering 38 kHz tone, beautiful in its articulate simplicity. Expertly modulating his volume the slow rise and fall of this single unadorned pitch rides the drafty air inside and outside the kitchen like a wind swept plastic bag. Wafting. Delicate. Sonically available to a multitude of species and inorganic objects, he hopes it’s soothing as he readies his folds for a more complex task.

Lately, he’s been exercising his post-traumatic vocal artifacts to great effect. He’s effortlessly acquired the magic ability to sound two pitches simultaneously, occasionally three. His control of frequency and resonation is still amateur but the trick itself is remarkable. This cooking space provides an ideal isolated rehearsal situation. Garnering his energies, he improvises, listening to the soundings that issue from his mouth with total concentration. He hits stride; is in a seamless reflexive mode of spontaneous precision. Each pitch massages the other as they interleave and separate, whispering and screaming, droning and shrilling. Immodestly it occurs to him he is
Dust

producing tonalities of sonorous cacophony; the darkest darks and brightest brights. Remembering the sesame bagel he considers “Black Holey” as a potential band name if he and his cousin ever go public. He quickly reconsiders, deciding it’s become a too trendy metaphor lately and he hates metaphors. He’ll need to be more original. “Dust” maybe. Or “Dust Breeders.” Keep it short, sweet, and existentially loaded. Generative matter and antimatter. Mind-dust, magic dust, stardust. “Caught in the devil’s bargain” dust to dust. Cool. He’ll try the idea out on his cousin and anyway, he’s ready to push his hospitality envelope a bit further. Dare to expose. Dare to share. Dare to collaborate …

Engrossed in his own engagement, at first BØB took little notice of the effects his resonations were having on the objects nearby. Ceramic bowls were cracking at the strain of maintaining their form within this whirling crux of vibratory forces. Glass jars shattered, pouring their contents. When he sustained a fluctuating frequency of 38.5 kHz for over 10 seconds, metal spoons bent at the fulcrum of their handles and the marble tops of the pastry tables ripped fault lines. So resonant were his voicings that they incorporated the many layers of ongoing audial activity in the immediate environment. The pings, pangs, and pops were a chorus to his soaring solo. As in any full-functioning umwelt, the sonic signatures intertwined, knotted, reciprocated. In one brief ecstatic occurrence he felt a bodybuzz unlike anything produced by the taint of Spiritus.

The addition of the sinister, low-pitched growling sound percolating from the north corner of the kitchen convolved with the crackles and snaps, working well in the indeterminate composition. Is this what is meant by “sublime” BØB wondered as the kitchen deterritorialized around him? Or is it rather an act of “sublimation” as the
alertness of his wide-awake processing wrapped itself in the somni-topos of his recurring dreamscape. He felt again the feeling of ascension to the upper floor of his illusory cushy house, folded in the embrace of variegated textures, riding wave upon wave in undulating anticipation.

He knew the freeze frame would soon follow. He waited for it. The beautiful overhanging arch of white-tipped blue blue blue, the humungous gaping jaw of the tsunami wave. He’d encountered this phantom so many times before … and then … again … rising above his swooning body in suspended animation … the enormous, pinkish, toothy, salivating jaw …